

SEP 30 2011

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION Room

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Roy E. Stephenson, Director  
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September 23, 2011

Marlene H. Dortch  
Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W., Room TW-A306  
Washington, DC 20554

Attention: Wireline Competition Bureau

**Re: State Commission Certification for Rate Comparability  
CC Docket No. 96-45**

Pursuant to *Section 54.317(b)* of *CFR Title 47*, the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission has reviewed the comparability of residential rates in rural areas of the state served by non-rural incumbent carriers (ILECs) to urban rates nationwide, and certifies that the rates are comparable. The Commission makes this attestation by use of the safe harbor provision and by comparing the residential rate in rural areas for Qwest, the only non-rural ILEC in New Mexico, to the nationwide urban benchmark of \$ 36.52.

Qwest's total monthly charge for flat-rate service in rural areas (statewide tariffs), calculated on the same basis as the FCC "Reference Book," is \$ 25.80 as of July 1, 2011, compared with the \$24.46 flat rate<sup>1</sup> in 2008. The difference is the result of a \$1 rate increase, effective June 4, 2010, along with associated fees and taxes.

<sup>1</sup> *Book of Rates, Price Indices, and Expenditures for Telephone Services, 2008*. Table 1.3 continued -Alamogordo New Mexico column 4, top row.

Therefore, Qwest's current rural rates are reasonably comparable to urban rates nationwide well, falling well within the safe harbor benchmark rate.

If additional information is required, please contact Ken Smith at 505-827-4411.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roy E. Stephenson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Roy E. Stephenson  
Utility Division Director

cc: Karen Majcher  
Vice President, High Cost & Low Income Division  
Universal Service Administration Company  
2000 L Street, N.W. Suite 200  
Washington D.C. 20036